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CENTRAL FAX CENTER

APR 30 2004

PTO/SB/30 (08-00)

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U.S. Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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**REQUEST  
FOR  
CONTINUED EXAMINATION  
(RCE)  
TRANSMITTAL**

Subsection (b) of 35 U.S.C. § 132, effective on May 29, 2000, provides for continued examination of an utility or plant application filed on or after June 8, 1995.

See The American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA).

<i>Application Number</i>	09/894,356
<i>Filing Date</i>	June 28, 2001
<i>First Named Inventor</i>	Mark A. Ritchart et al.
<i>Group Art Unit</i>	3736
<i>Examiner Name</i>	J. Foreman
<i>Attorney Docket Number</i>	END-770

CUSTOMER NO.

000027777

This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 of the above-identified application.

*NOTE: 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 is effective on May 29, 2000. If the above-identified application was filed prior to May 29, 2000, applicant may wish to consider filing a continued prosecution application (CPA) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53 (d) (PTO/SB/29) instead of a RCE to be eligible for the patent term adjustment provisions of the AIPA. See Changes to Application Examination and Provisional Application Practice, Final Rule, 65 Fed. Reg. 50092 (Aug. 16, 2000); Interim Rule, 65 Fed. Reg. 14885 (Mar. 20, 2000), 1233 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 47 (Apr. 11, 2000), which established RCE practice.*

**1. Submission required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114**

- a.  Previously submitted
  - i.  Consider the amendment(s)/reply under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 previously filed on (any unentered amendment(s) referred to above will be entered).
  - ii.  Consider the arguments in the Appeal Brief or Reply Brief previously filed on
  - iii.  Other
- b.  Enclosed
  - i.  Amendment/Reply
  - ii.  Affidavit(s)/Declaration(s)
  - iii.  Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)
  - iv.  Other

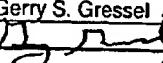
**2. Miscellaneous**

- a.  Suspension of action on the above-identified application is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.103(c) for a period of months. (Period of suspension shall not exceed 3 months; Fee under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(i) required.)
- b.  Other

**3. Fees**

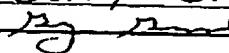
- a.  The Director is hereby authorized to charge the following fees, or credit any overpayments, to Deposit Account No. 10-0750 /END-770/GSG.
  - i.  RCE fee is required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(e)
  - ii.  Extension of Time (37 C.F.R. §§ 1.136 and 1.17)
  - iii.  Other
- b.  Check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed
- c.  Payment by credit card (Form PTO-2038 enclosed)

**SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT, ATTORNEY, OR AGENT REQUIRED**

Name (print/type)	Gerry S. Gressel	Registration No.	34,342
Signature		Date	April 30, 2004

**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING OR TRANSMISSION**

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5 pages

Serial No. 09/894,356

**RECEIVED  
CENTRAL FAX CENTER****IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE** APR 30 2004

Conf No. 3422  
Applicant : Mark A. Ritchart et al.  
Application No. : 09/894,356  
Filed : June 28, 2001  
Title : METHODS AND DEVICES FOR  
COLLECTION OF SOFT TISSUE  
  
Group/Art Unit : 3736  
Examiner : Foreman, Jonathan  
  
Docket No. : END-770

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(Signature)

Honorable Commissioner of Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**Preliminary Amendment/ RCE responding to Office Action of AUGUST 28, 2003**

Dear Sir:

This preliminary amendment and RCE are being submitted after a Notice of Appeal filed March 1, 2004, and before filing of an Appeal Brief. Please consider the claims as amended.

**Amendment begins on Page 2**